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## THE NEW CHRISTIANITY AND WORLD-CONVERSION

—*Concluded*

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But there are signs of the coming of a new day for foreign missions, when a wiser, because more generous and less timid, policy will prevail. One of the gratifying things about recent reports from the mission field is the frank and cordial expression on the part of many missionaries of their appreciation of the value of the higher criticism as an aid to evangelization. Against many of the attacks of non-Christians it is found to afford a complete defense.<sup>1</sup> And as we read in one of the reports: "The activity and unrest of theological thought in the West is already powerfully affecting many minds in other lands, and probably not many years will have passed before the free spirit of oriental Christians will find expression in views of truth and adaptations of Christian doctrine which may perhaps startle, and even for a time pain, their teachers." Such things necessarily belong to a time of transition; moreover, they are always the nobler spirits who choose the privations of the wilderness-journey for the sake of freedom and a place they can call their own, rather than to be fed to the full in the house of their bondage. And then, as Professor Cairns reminds us, it is out of new emergencies that new faith is always born.<sup>2</sup>

If it be asked whether it is a new faith—a new kind of faith, that is—a new religion, or simply a "new theology of the old faith," that is called for in the present situation, the answer is that that remains to be seen. It is a serious question to what extent we can have the "old-time religion" without the old-time theology. Religion is not in the first instance the product of theology, to be sure; rather is theology the product of religion. But it is no mere by-product; it is produced for a purpose, viz., to guide religious adjustment for the sake of controlling religious experience. Consequently some of the more radical changes in theology have a very practical

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the World Missionary Conference, 1910*, II, 262-63; IV, 200-204.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 215.

significance, for better or for worse, in relation to religious experience. If our new theology has resulted from such an elimination of the old and addition of the new that a difference is made in the objects and manner and results of our prayer, then in some real sense we have changed our religion. In turning now from the critical to the constructive part of our discussion we must deal with such changes as appear most imperative in theology, leaving it to be determined, as we proceed, to what extent these carry with them a change in religion.

It has been intimated that before the missionary message can be expected to win the modern critical, scientific, reality-loving world, it must be rid of the reproach of the old supernaturalism, the old evangelicalism, and the old orthodoxy. But mere negation is not enough. This has been the great reason for the non-evangelistic character of most religious liberalism hitherto, and of its failure to convert and inspire the world: its message has been predominantly negative. The old Christianity was positive and vital; we must conserve for our new age, if we can, the vital essence of Christian supernaturalism, of Christian evangelicalism, and of Christian orthodoxy.

First, then, let us inquire whether the religion for the world—which must be rational, not unscientific—can find room for *a new Christian supernaturalism*. “Miracle is the dearest child of faith”—and why? Not because of any difficulty it may make for scientific understanding, but because it is an event within human experience which can be interpreted as in a special sense the direct and immediate product of the divine purposive activity, and thus a sign of the divine presence. This is the essential definition of miracle, rather than that which makes it consist in a breach of cosmic law and order. Miracle is special providence, revelation. It is thus essential to vital religion. Unless there are events within our knowledge to which we can point as the purposive acts of God, and unless such events may possibly take place within our own experience, it does not matter much what kind of religion we have: it is as if there were no God.

This is not meant as a defense of the view that arbitrary or magical changes in the order of natural events, such as would defeat

man's purpose to understand the world he lives in, have taken place, or ever will take place. It is not meant that we are asked to admit as authentic history anything, even in the life of Jesus, which is not intelligible and probable in the light of practically unquestioned human experience. We deem it probable that he was a more than ordinarily successful faith-healer, but it is not even works of this sort that have the greatest revelation-value, or are most clearly miraculous, supernatural, according to the new Christian supernaturalism. The great miracle of the Christian religion is what God accomplished in the spiritual life of Jesus, and what he accomplishes in the lives of the disciples of Jesus. Regeneration, sanctification, enduement with power through the Spirit of God—these are the true and constant miracles of our religion.

It may be said that the history of religion is the record of a prolonged series of religious experiments, made with a view to learning what kind of miracles actually do take place, or, in other words, what sort of prayer is uniformly—and therefore *really*—answered. That will be the final religion which is able to arrive at a universally valid induction on this point. We believe that in the essentially Christian attitude of persistent religious dependence for moral renewal there is the true prayer which is always answered, so that in essential Christianity, with its experience of this spiritual miracle, we have reached finality—not the end of development, but eternal validity—in religion.

But can this supernaturalism be maintained philosophically? We believe it can. As Driesch and other neo-vitalists are enabling us to see more clearly than before, the phenomena of even physical life are not to be explained, without remainder, in terms of chemical and mechanical law; the biological or physiological organizes mechanism into its service, indeed, but it is essentially teleological, supermechanical. In consciousness we see this *élan vital*—to use Bergson's term—this creative life-power, in still higher form, organizing not only inorganic but also organic processes into the service of its ends; this psychical reality we may speak of as superphysical or even superphysiological. But in the life of the human spirit, with its power of creating ideals and creatively striving for their realization, subduing not only the mechanical

but the life of subconscious impulse and mere desire to the requirements of the ideal, we have a still higher form of creative activity; if we consent to equate nature with the universe in so far as it is of a lower order of creative activity, qualitatively, than this which is distinctively human, we may call this last supernatural. In the spiritual life, as Eucken virtually maintains, we have the presence and creative activity of the supernatural. Indeed, this term may be applied, in a sense, to all free human activity. The spiritual life of man is not reducible, without remainder, even to psychological law; habitual psychoses—which the laws of psychology describe—are freely readjusted by a creative principle, adequately to deal with which we need the point of view which Eucken calls noölogical, that of the free activity of spirit, as distinguished from the psychological, which deals with the pre-determined. But, once more, when man, through a spiritual adjustment to a superhuman Spiritual Power or Being, experiences a new increment of power in his spiritual life, a moral uplift which is to be referred, inductively, to his religious relationship and that religious Object for its adequate explanation, this is the highest type of creative activity that we know. It is not only supernatural, as, in some sense, the spiritual always is; it is also superhuman, miraculous, the immediate creative activity of God. This is the miracle of which we need not remain in doubt, for we may experience it within our own lives.

This view has some points of agreement with the position taken by Bushnell in his *Nature and the Supernatural*, but it is not identical with his view. He maintained, indeed, that all free human action is supernatural; but the point toward which his argument is directed is a defense of the possibility of such marvelous events as are related in the Gospels. "We require," he says, "to be certified that the miracles reported are facts. This done, Christianity, as a supernatural revelation of God, is established."<sup>2</sup> His view of the supernatural activity of God is accordingly that it is similar to, and co-ordinate with, the supernatural activity of man. But there are several difficulties which must be encountered by any such theory. In the first place, there would be this difference between

<sup>2</sup> *Nature and the Supernatural* (ed. 1886), p. 333.

this supposed supernatural activity of God and the supernatural activity of man, in so far as they are thought of as co-ordinating mechanical processes in new ways, that while the human action on the mechanical is mediated through the biological, the supposed divine action would apparently be entirely unmediated. Again, while we are constantly witnessing the supernatural activity of man, this *co-ordinate* supernatural activity of God does not come within our observation. Whatever may be said of God's action in the life of man, we see no unmediated action of God in the world of nature below man. True, if certain of the events recorded in the Gospels are accepted as authentic history, they might conceivably be interpreted as supernatural acts of God, but whether those recorded events actually took place is the exact matter of dispute. A theory which finds its only basis in that which is to be based upon the theory itself is neither well founded nor a good foundation.

Our view, as distinct from Bushnell's, is that the supernatural activity of God is not co-ordinate with man's but superordinate. The supernatural activity of God is in and through the supernatural activity of man, which again is through the psychical or superphysical. This, again, in so far as it is directed toward the co-ordination of mechanical processes, is always through the biological or supermechanical. There is then a hierarchy of realities, each characterized by creative activity, but related to the others as follows: the mechanical subordinated to the biological, or physiological, the physiological to the psychological, the psychological to the noölogical (the human supernatural), and the noölogical to the theological, or God (the superhuman supernatural). On this view the only miracles that we know anything about are the works of God within the life of the human spirit.

Does this new supernaturalism mean a new religion? To a certain extent it does. It means that there will be eliminated from religious experience the distress that comes from the failure of efforts after the unattainable. Special providences and direct answers to prayer will not be looked for outside the realm of the human spirit. Such scattered instances as might seem to be such will be interpreted as coincidences. In some sense, then, the new supernaturalism will mean a new religion. But, on the other hand,

it is the Christlike quality of life that will be sought through a Christlike attitude toward a Christlike God. The religion will therefore be essentially Christian. But a religion which is at once both new and Christian must be properly designated as a new Christianity. The supernaturalism which we have just described is therefore rightly designated as the new Christian supernaturalism.

Our next inquiry must be as to whether a thoroughly rational—and so possibly universal—religion can find room for a *new Christian evangelicalism*. The Christian gospel has always been a message of salvation from sin and its consequences, through faith in God as he is revealed in Jesus Christ. Our problem is whether, within the limits of scientific (rational and empirical) religion, there is room for this Christian gospel in vitality and power. Since we are especially concerned with salvation from sin and its consequences, it will be well to begin by indicating the general relation of morality to the other universal human interests.

The universal human interests are perhaps seven: the hygienic, the economic, the social, the scientific, the aesthetic, the moral, and the religious.<sup>1</sup> A spiritual life is one in which the spiritual interests are properly co-ordinated with each other as ultimate ends, the others being regarded as means rather than as ends. The spiritual interests are the scientific, the aesthetic, the moral, the religious, and the social, in so far as one's fellows are viewed as ends rather than as means. Ultimately the hygienic and economic are to be viewed as means to the realization of the spiritual interests as represented by the ideals of universal human well-being and brotherhood (social), knowledge of the truth (scientific), contemplation of the beautiful (aesthetic), perfection of character and conduct (moral), and fellowship with God (religious). Now the spiritual interests, while co-ordinate in the sense that they are all legitimate elements of the ultimate end, are also related to each other in other ways. The scientific, for example, is not only an end, but a necessary means to the realization of all the other interests. The aesthetic not only has a content co-ordinate with the

<sup>1</sup> For this classification I am indebted to Professors A. W. Small and C. R. Henderson. Professor Henderson's list differs from that of Professor Small in making the moral and the religious distinct interests.

others, but, in so far as any activity comes to be an end rather than a means to other ends, it passes over into the aesthetic; work, when interesting for its own sake, becomes art, and its product an object of aesthetic contemplation. Morality as rightness of character is an ultimate end; as rightness of conduct it is means to the realization of all universal human interests in their proper relation to each other. Thus sin, defect of morality, especially in conduct, has evil external consequences in relation to the other human interests, as well as evil internal consequences in character. Finally, we would maintain, the religious is not only an end in itself; it is a means to morality, and through morality to all universal human interests.

If we mean by salvation what God does for human welfare, especially through man's religious life, it may be said that salvation is primarily moral (as well as religious), and—through this moral salvation—also social, intellectual, aesthetic, and even hygienic and economic. Thus we see in their true perspective the measure of validity in the religion of health, the religion of economic success,<sup>1</sup> the religion of humanity, the religion of science, and the religion of art. True, i.e., verifiable, religion, we would maintain as an induction based upon observation of the religious experience of man, is primarily the religion of morality. It becomes, of course, religion for its own sake, but it is from the beginning religion for the sake of morality primarily. Secondarily it may be for the sake of health, or wealth, or friendship, or knowledge, or art. But the way in which religion promotes these interests—at least, ordinarily—is indirectly, through promoting morality. True religion is thus primarily moral salvation through religious dependence. This salvation may be either prevention of sin or its cure. When it is cure, it may be called moral redemption.

We are now in a position to state what is essential in Christianity. The primary thing—logically speaking—is Christian morality, Christlikeness of character and conduct, spirituality, and unselfish brotherly love. Following the moral example of Jesus will lead to the unification of humanity, the reconciliation, at-one-ment, of man with man, and that upon the highest level of spiritual interest. But this following of the moral example of Jesus is not,

<sup>1</sup> See T. N. Carver, *The Religion Worth Having*.



as the Socinians thought, the essence of the Christian gospel. It is not gospel at all, but law—the new law of love. The at-one-ment of man with man is not—as some modern theologians and philosophers,<sup>1</sup> under the influence of immanental idealism, have maintained—itsself the *religious* experience of salvation, redemption, atonement. It is one of its consequences, rather.

The Christian *law*, then, is concerned with following the *moral* example of Jesus—not a slavish external imitation, but action according to his fundamental principle, ideal, and spirit. The Christian *gospel*, however, is the good news as to how this may be most successfully accomplished. It is concerned with the *religious* example of Christ. It is the good news that every human being may, if he will, follow the religious example of Christ, be related to God as Christ was, which is both an ultimate end in itself, and at the same time the most effective means toward following Christ's moral example. Through his religious life, his union with God, Christ was saved from sin—by way of prevention. Through a Christlike union with God we may be saved from sin—by way of cure and prevention both. The definite establishment of this union of man with God is the unification, the at-one-ment, of man with God. It is not complete salvation; it is but the beginning of salvation, but it has in it the promise and potency of conformity to the image of the Son of God.

If the question be raised how men who are sinful can follow the religious example of Christ, how those estranged from God through their own sin can begin to have fellowship with God, the answer will involve both reference to what was said in connection with the new supernaturalism, and a partial anticipation of what is to be dealt with in our consideration of the new orthodoxy. Through the Christlike religious adjustment the creative activity of God in the spiritual life of man is made most readily possible. This will mean, then, that the characteristic moral activity of Christ was the direct outcome of the creative operation of God. The distinctive thing about Christ, then, is the divine life and activity in him, and this

<sup>1</sup> E. g., R. J. Campbell in *The New Theology*, and J. Royce in *The Problem of Christianity*, and also in an article entitled "The Christian Doctrine of Life" (*Hibbert Journal*, April, 1913).

means that if we would know the character of God, we may learn it by remembering the character Christ was enabled to have through the presence of God in his life. God, then, must be like Christ—spiritual, holy, indeed, but full of love and compassion for sinful humanity, not willing that any should perish, but willing that all should come to repentance. Indeed, on this view even the burden which lay upon the heart of Jesus because of the sin of the world of human beings whom he loved and whom he sought to save, by bringing them into fellowship with God, is but representative of the burden that lies upon the heart of God, because he loves the sinner while he hates his sin. Obviously, then, man's sin can never be a valid reason for staying away from God. The sinner is to come, just as he is, to the gracious God who came so fully into the life of Jesus Christ in saving power; and, coming in repentance and trust, he will be reconciled, united in the fellowship of love, *at one* with God. Then he is in a position to enter into his birthright; he too is a "son of God"; he too will be progressively saved from sinning in so far as he lives up to his privilege and follows the religious example of Jesus. He will be progressively saved too—not in a magical way, but in a way that is rationally intelligible—from the consequences of sin. He is saved from what would have been the evil consequences of the sins which he might have committed, but from committing which he was kept by the indwelling power of God. He is also increasingly saved from the consequences of sin committed in the past, by a process of counteracting those evil consequences through the moral activity made possible through following the religious example of Christ.

This view of the gospel has the great merit of being at the same time rational, moral, and vital. It is rational in the best sense of that word; it is empirically rational, scientifically verifiable. It is vital in that, like the gospel in its old form, it appeals to hope, while it presupposes fear. There is this difference, however, that the hope and the fear are both more rational, because they are moral. The fear is the fear, primarily, of moral deterioration through actual sin, and also of the loss of values, individual and social, that will be bound up with this moral deterioration. The

hope is the hope of moral salvation through coming in repentance and dependence to the God of Jesus Christ, and taking up for life the Christlike religious attitude.

This view is thoroughly moral, as is shown by the way in which it finally solves the old problem of the satisfaction of the righteousness of God. The chief criticism directed against the prevailing modern theory of the atonement—which has been variously styled the ethical, moral, or moral-influence theory—has been the charge that it fails to deal satisfactorily with this problem. It is felt that, while true repentance is indeed the indispensable condition and preparation for being forgiven, reconciled to God, still God's righteousness is not satisfied with repentance alone, for the reason that evil moral and other consequences of the sin repented of are still in existence. Some theologians vainly endeavor to impart a semblance of rationality to the forever outgrown notion of vicarious punishment; others frame ingenious new theories of their own, but in most cases with no better success. Two lines of thought, however, in attempted supplementation of the Bushnellian moral theory, deserve special mention. The one theory places the responsibility for satisfying the righteousness of God upon God himself;<sup>1</sup> the other places it upon man.<sup>2</sup> According to the former theory God is justified in forgiving the repentant sinner only because he (God) takes upon himself the task of completely eradicating all evil consequences of all human sin, and foresees that it will be done. (According to Dinsmore's theory, God eternally sees it as already accomplished.) According to the other view, however, God is justified in forgiving the repentant sinner only because man, in his repentance, virtually takes upon himself the task of co-operating with God as fully as possible for the total eradication of sin and all its evil consequences. In both positions it is maintained that God's righteousness can be satisfied only with the eradication of the sin and all its evil consequences. But each of these theories has its own peculiar weakness. The former view tends to be religious without being moral; the latter, to be moral without being

<sup>1</sup> C. A. Dinsmore, *Atonement in Literature and Life*.

<sup>2</sup> G. B. Smith, *The Atonement* (Burton, Smith, and Smith); cf. also E. W. Lyman, *Theology and Human Problems*, chap. iv.

religious. The former encourages gratitude to God for the destruction of sin and evil, but tends to weaken the sense of human responsibility—especially when one tries to view the matter *sub specie aeternitatis*. The latter view encourages a sense of responsibility on the part of the forgiven sinner, but it does not explicitly point him to God as the only one whose power we can be sure is adequate to cope with sin. The one tends to dependence upon God without self-dependence; the other, to self-dependence without dependence upon God. In the view which we have tried to set forth here, however, these defects are overcome. Salvation is primarily moral deliverance through religious dependence; although ultimately it will include the realization of all that is dependent upon that moral deliverance. It is moral unification and union of man with God, eventuating in the moral unification and union of man with man. Thus from the beginning the religious dependence is moral in its purpose, and the moral task is undertaken in religious dependence. And so we see that when evangelicalism is made thoroughly rational, it necessarily becomes thoroughly moral and therefore remains thoroughly vital—or, rather, attains to a vitality which no future advance in culture can ever destroy.

It is not the least of the merits of this interpretation of the gospel that, if adopted by the Christian missionary, it would completely remove the foundation for all objections made on rational and moral grounds by non-Christian peoples, and especially by the Hindus, against the Christian message of salvation. The message of the cross no longer need be “to the Greeks”—or to the Hindus, either—“foolishness.” Indeed, even the objection to the common Christian over-emphasis of a particular fact of history, staking not only the verifiability but the truth and value of Christian faith upon an event only very indirectly accessible to the man of today, would be removed, and that without losing the value contained in that supremely significant historic fact. If the historicity of Jesus ever should be disproved, or rendered seriously doubtful, the Christian gospel of salvation would still be verifiable in human experience, and a Christlike life could still be fostered by a Christlike dependence upon a Christlike God. But, being practically certain of the *essential* historicity of Jesus, we have all the advantages that

come from reference to this fullest of all revelations of the divine in human life.

Does this mean a "new gospel," a new religion? This question must be answered by comparing the religious experience which it mediates with that which was characteristic of the older evangelicalism. Certain differences do appear. Salvation being no longer interpreted as primarily eschatological in its significance, or magical in its mediation, the preaching of the gospel will no longer be in danger of encouraging the thought that one may sin, that grace may abound. The element of experience, due to the reaction that follows being delivered from a somewhat irrational fear without the irrationality of the fear being discovered, will also be eliminated. There will also be the tendency to experience a broader salvation, inasmuch as morality is here interpreted as organically related to everything that has to do with the true welfare of man. And yet, all this does but leave one less trammelled by mistaken ideas than before to enter into that moral religious experience which always has been the most vital essence of Christian evangelicalism. Again, therefore, we are led to the judgment that, while with this gospel our religion will be in some respects new, it will still be in its essence most undoubtedly Christian. What it offers is a new Christian evangelicalism.

We have still to raise the question whether, within the limits of a scientifically rational religion, we can have a doctrine of God that will embody and preserve, and mediate to the world, the essential values of Christian faith and experience. Can we have a religiously sufficient and universally accessible doctrine of God—perchance a *new Christian orthodoxy*? Our doctrine of God must meet the essential demands of moral religion, and must embody the fundamental assurance of mystical religion. It must avoid the one-sidedness of Judaism, Mohammedanism, and historic Unitarianism on the one hand, and that of Greek mystical religion, Hinduism, and modern mysticism, with its tendency to an impersonal Absolutism, on the other.

In its doctrine of the person of Christ it must and may maintain that, essential historicity being taken for granted as sufficiently certain, it was the life and activity of God that were present and mani-

fested in him. Especially through his religious life, which was the appropriating of the power of the spirit of God, the divine spiritual life was manifested in him in such a unique degree that, of all the sons of God in whose spiritual lives God creatively works, Jesus Christ stands forth as the peerless one, *the* Son of God, having the unique function of being the truest norm for human morality and religion, and the supreme revelation of God in the life of an individual man. The most essential doctrine of Christian theology—of the new Christian orthodoxy, if you will—is that of the special presence and creative activity of God, not only, as we believe, in the man Christ Jesus, but also in the Christlike everywhere.

In undertaking to suggest a modern substitute for the Trinitarian formula, it may be noted that Christian mysticism, generally speaking, has long since learned that it must be moral; hence the tendency to hold to the merely superpersonal divine Substance of the negative theology has practically disappeared. In place of it there is the impersonal physical universe, with the various grades of supermechanical creative activity to which we referred in our brief exposition of the new supernaturalism. Modern theism, constructed under the influence of this empirically grounded creative evolutionism, or activism, will tend to regard God's relation to the universe somewhat after the analogy of the relation of the human spirit to the human body. When moral religion becomes so vital and experiential that it verges upon the mystical, and when mystical religion becomes sane and practical and thereby necessarily moral, both coincide in the affirmation of the essential personality and spirituality of God. In the one case this is a postulate taken as a working hypothesis and verified; in the other case, an intuition critically tested in the light of practical life. As transcendent, this personal life of the cosmos is God the Father; as immanent in the spiritual life of man, God the Holy Spirit. Normally, that is, in the realization of true ideals, human beings are organs through which the activities of God the Holy Spirit are carried out in the world. Thus God is not only *in* three persons; he is in millions of persons, and yet he is but one Person. The Father is God; the Holy Spirit is God; the Father is the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is the Father. The Son of God was and is the human Jesus. The Son

is not the Father; the Son is not the Holy Spirit; the Son is not God; but God, the Father, the Holy Spirit, was in the Son, and is in his "many brethren." But in unique measure God, the Father, the Holy Spirit, was in *him*, reconciling the world unto himself. Our complete Christian view of God, then, is that he is God the Father, present as the Holy Spirit in the spiritual lives of men, and so fully present in the historic Jesus that he becomes for us *the* divine man, holding the unique position of being *the* historic Revealer of God and Savior of men.

This is neither historic Trinitarianism nor historic Unitarianism, but it contains, in our opinion, the essentials of each of those largely obsolete doctrinal systems. It combines the religious values of Trinitarianism—those of moral and mystical religion—with the rationality insisted upon by Unitarianism. If, as it seems to be, it is the view of God involved in what we have called the new Christian supernaturalism and the new Christian evangelicalism, it is new only as they are new; it is as Christian as they are. It presents, in bare outline, what we may take to be the new Christian orthodoxy.

It was claimed for the older orthodoxy once upon a time that it was the universal traditional Christian doctrine—*quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est*, as Vincent of Lerins phrased it. But that there was any considerable body of doctrine which had been steadfastly believed by all Christians everywhere from the beginning was itself a belief whose certainty was likely to vary inversely with the extent to which the facts had been investigated; it was best maintained as a dogma. The new Christian orthodoxy will be of a different spirit. Its face will be toward the future, rather than toward the past. Its method will be empirical investigation, rather than *ex cathedra* utterance. It will undertake to set forth what ought to be believed by all Christians everywhere, and what will be believed by persons of vital Christian experience so soon as their theology has become genuinely scientific. In the end the only doctrine that is really catholic, that can command universal belief, is science; and the question of a catholic religious doctrine for the future is the question of the possibility of a scientific theology. But if what we have called the new Christian super-

naturalism and the new Christian evangelicalism are fundamentally valid, the primary conditions for the formulation of such a theology are fulfilled. There is a type of religious experience through which the divine activity in human life can be made the object of a genuinely scientific observation. What God is can be known—within limits, of course—by what he can be depended upon to do in human life, when that life is in proper religious adjustment. As we have seen, there is a moral result of a certain sort for which man can depend upon God, and he can learn how he must adjust himself to the religious Object, God, in order to obtain that result. It needs, then, only that one should have, and that he should scientifically use, the power of religious perception—of being aware of the divine when it is actively present—for the construction of a scientific inductive theology to be entirely feasible.

Our contention, then, is that with the new Christian supernaturalism, the new Christian evangelicalism, and the new Christian orthodoxy, continuously developed along empirically scientific lines, we have what may be called, if one pleases, *a new Christianity*. By this is not meant anything unduly radical, but simply Christianity universalized for the twentieth century. We would not advocate any mere haphazard syncretism of the religions of the world, guided only by the principle of mutual compromise. There must be competition, the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, among religions as among other human institutions, and only a religion whose theology can become scientific is fitted to survive. Our belief is that such a religion will turn out to be essentially Christian.

We do not mean, however, that the conversion of the world, even to such a religion, is inevitable. What we wish to say is that the time is coming when the world will have a religion with a scientific theology, a religion containing in rational, scientific form, a new Christian supernaturalism, a new Christian evangelicalism, and a new Christian orthodoxy, if it has any religion at all. The world's religion will be the new Christianity, or none. The new Christianity has a good fighting chance of converting and ultimately Christianizing the world. The old Christianity, unless the race should lapse to a prescientific level, has not even a fighting chance.



The new Christianity calls for a *new Christian evangelism*. It must be broader in its outlook than the old evangelism, realizing that religion is essentially akin to other spiritual values, in that what God does in response to religious adjustment is ultimately identical with what is accomplished when any truly spiritual ideals are realized. But while broader than the old evangelism, the new cannot afford to be any less devoted. And, as needs above all to be emphasized today, the new evangelism must be characterized by great frankness in discussion. One source of weakness in the modern pulpit is that many preachers feel that, for prudential reasons, they must keep back part of the truth. Their sermons lack the enthusiasm and abandon of the old-time evangelism. We must be pedagogical, it is true; but we must not be pusillanimous. "The meanest of misers is he who hoards the truth." There was one who came not to send peace on the earth, but the sword. "And when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." Indeed, the well-equipped minister or missionary of today has a special advantage over those who sought to evangelize an earlier generation, with its greater subserviency to tradition. There are fewer today than formerly who are averse to an impersonal discussion of fundamental religious problems; but inasmuch as these questions cannot be scientifically treated without reference to religious experience, theological discussion will readily lend itself to the purposes of evangelism. In the most natural way it leads up to an emphasis upon the necessity, even for purposes of knowledge, of a deepening of the spiritual life through the cultivation of personal religion.

Men must be recruited and trained for the new Christian evangelism. Special effort must be made to get able, scientifically minded young men into the ministry and into missionary service. They must be trained to be independent workers in the construction of a scientific, empirical theology. It is a lamentable fact that almost all that is taught in our theological seminaries today, whether conservative or liberal, is a combination of science that is no longer strictly theological, with theology that is not yet completely scientific. Conferences of theological students and professors are held from time to time throughout the land to

discuss everything that pertains to the evangelization of the world—everything, that is, except theology. But, unless we are wholly mistaken, the Student Volunteer Movement and the Laymen's Missionary Movement will make comparatively little impression upon the non-Christian world, unless they are accompanied by a third movement which shall have for its aim the preparation of missionaries to work in a thoroughly scientific manner for the conversion of the world to the new Christianity.

It remains to note briefly the relation of this evangelism of the new Christianity to the growing movement for Christian union. The main forces underlying this union movement are perhaps three. There is the prudential, largely economic motive, which would tend to the amalgamation of ecclesiastical organizations for the sake of reducing expenses. With most, let us hope, this financial consideration is purely secondary. At any rate it is a factor which may be ignored in the present connection; it has nothing in common with the forces making for the new Christianity. A second motive at work in the union movement is mainly sentimental. There are many who long for the prestige of numbers, and who, from an interest in historic continuity, would be prepared to sacrifice much for the sake of the reunion of all Christendom by a return to the doctrine and polity of the ancient Catholic church. Such propagandists for union are, at least from the point of view of the new Christianity, the false prophets of the movement. The path of progress does not lie in the direction of the old Catholicism. The churches commonly called Catholic must experience an intellectual emancipation before affiliation with them can be anything but a hindrance to the development of that new Christianity to which alone the world can be converted. Protestantism must not barter away at any price her hard-won Christian freedom.

But there is a third factor underlying the union movement which is of one spirit with all that underlies the new Christian evangelism. This is the growing feeling that, in view of the supreme task of the evangelization, conversion, and Christianization of the world, the points upon which the churches are divided are of but slight importance today, except where the vital religious experience of the members is directly concerned. For the sake of

the transfer of emphasis from things trivial to matters of supreme moment, the new evangelism is interested in Christian union. But union must not be consummated, it would insist, at the expense of spiritual freedom. Its hope can only be that the united church of the future will be left freely to develop into an embodiment of the new Christianity and the chosen instrument of world-conversion. For the sake of freedom to be true to her own deeper insight, Christianity was obliged to cut loose from Judaism. For the same reason Protestantism was compelled to come out and be separate from the Roman church. There are few projects before the Christian churches of today of greater moment than that of Christian union; but one of these is the development of a scientifically rational and essentially Christian theology, both for the sake of those already Christian, and for the conversion of the non-Christian nations. For the sake of freedom to pursue this greater good we should give to the movement for the union of the churches our cordial, but not uncritical, support.